

FRANCE

End of the War

Buried on page 15,385 of the U.S. Federal Register last week was a brief announcement in almost incomprehensible officialese. Its well-hidden message: the U.S. Government has ended its 75-day war against all imports from France containing nickel. Washington banned the imports last October (and promptly impounded more than a dozen shipments) because France's giant Le Nickel had been buying large



RACERS LOADED AT ROME
and the world.

amounts of nickel oxide from Castro's Cuba. Shipments could resume, said the U.S., if the French would guarantee that they contained no Cuban nickel.

The French government, according to the U.S. announcement, has now agreed to do just that; it has promised to refuse export licenses to the U.S. to any French company using nickel from Cuba. The U.S. will simply accept the French government guarantee, has already released all the impounded shipments. Le Nickel plans to use the Cuban metal for non-U.S. customers, will supply U.S. buyers from its main mines in New Caledonia. For that purpose, it has signed preliminary agreements with Kaiser Aluminum to form two joint companies, one in New Caledonia to step up nickel production and another in the U.S. to sell and distribute it.